dividing the sum-total of wages of all the 20 States by the number of quotations. The methodology and the wage rates are published in the Bureau's monthly publication 'Indian Labour Journal' and in its website: http://labourbureau.nic.in

Ex-gratia payment to kin of fishermen held captive in Pakistan

1970. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to grant an ex-gratia payment of Rs. 3 lakh to the next of kin of fishermen who have been held captive in Pakistan;

(b) if so, the total number of fishermen held captive in Pakistan;

(c) whether some fishermen are also being held captive in other countries; and

(d) if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are 312 Indian fishermen currently in Pakistan jails.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Extinction of local indigenous seeds

1971. KUMARI NIRMALA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the local indigenous seeds grown in various areas are on the verge of extinction;

(b) the reasons for this calamity; and

(c) what measures are being planned to save the local indigenous seeds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The quality seed and planting materials of high yielding varieties/ hybrids of different crops constitute a key input for increasing their production and productivity. In order to ensure food and nutritional security it is essential that high yielding varieties are popularized for cultivation. The local indigenous crop varieties may be replaced by the adoption of high yielding varieties/hybids by the farmers to get higher yields and better returns. The natural calamities, human intervention for developmental activities including urbanizaiton and habitat destruction, disease/insect epidemics etc. are other causes of erosion of crop bio-diversity.

(c) The National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR), New Delhi is collecting, conserving and documenting the germplasm of crop plants including seeds of local landraces/ farmer's varieties in National Genebank as also under the provisions of Protection of Plant Varieties & Farmers' Rights Act (PPV & FR Act), 2001. The National Genebank presently holds more than 3.50 lakh accessions of over 1,200 crop/plant species.